

REMARKS

I. Introduction

In the Office Action, claims 1-11 are examined. Claims 1-5 are allowed. Claims 6-11, however, are rejected. Specifically, claims 6-9 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0172201 to Hatae et al. (hereinafter “Hatae”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,751,221 to Saito et al. (hereinafter “Saito”); and claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Hatae in view of Saito, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,445,711 to Scheel et al. (hereinafter “Scheel”).

II. Allowable Subject Matter

As noted above, claim 1-5 are allowed. Claim 2 is amended to correct an inadvertent typographical error therein.

Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 8-10 should be allowed, at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1. Furthermore, claim 7, which is a multiple dependent claim, has instances that should be allowed. For example, claims 7/2¹, 7/3, 7/4 and 7/5 should be allowed, at least by virtue of their dependency.

¹ The format x/y refers to the instance of multiple dependent claim x that depends from claim y.

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U.S. Application No. 09/626,080
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Accordingly, Applicant's representative called Examiner K. Vanderpuye on May 17, 2005 to discuss these claims. During the telephone conference, the Examiner agreed that claims 7/2, 7/3, 7/4, 7/5 and 8-10 should be allowed, in addition to claims 1-5.

Therefore, only claims 6, 7/6 and 11 are not allowed (*i.e.*, are rejected).

III. Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

As noted above, claims 6, 7/6 and 11 stand rejected under § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Hatae in view of Saito.

Applicant amends claim 6 to restore it to its originally-filed dependent form, *i.e.*, as depending from claim 1, thereby placing claim 6 in condition for immediate allowance. Consequently, claim 7/6 should be allowed, at least by virtue of its dependency.

Additionally, Applicant amends claim 11 so that it depends from claim 1, thereby placing claim 11 in condition for immediate allowance.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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